



U.S. SENATOR • ARIZONA

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**STATEMENT BY SENATORS McCAIN AND GRAHAM ON U.S.-
RUSSIAN AGREEMENT ON SYRIA**

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) today released the following statement on the U.S.-Russian agreement on Syria:

“What concerns us most is that our friends and enemies will take the same lessons from this agreement – they see it as an act of provocative weakness on America's part. We cannot imagine a worse signal to send to Iran as it continues its push for a nuclear weapon.

“Without a U.N. Security Council Resolution under Chapter 7 authority, which threatens the use of force for non-compliance by the Assad regime, this framework agreement is meaningless. Assad will use the months and months afforded to him to delay and deceive the world using every trick in Saddam Hussein's playbook. It requires a willful suspension of disbelief to see this agreement as anything other than the start of a diplomatic blind alley, and the Obama Administration is being led into it by Bashar Assad and Vladimir Putin.

“What's worse, this agreement does nothing to resolve the real problem in Syria, which is the underlying conflict that has killed 110,000 people, driven millions from their homes, destabilized our friends and allies in the region, emboldened Iran and its terrorist proxies, and become a safe haven for thousands of Al-Qaeda affiliated extremists. Is the message of this agreement that Assad is now our negotiating partner, and that he can go on slaughtering innocent civilians and destabilizing the Middle East using every tool of warfare, so long as he does not use chemical weapons? That is morally and strategically indefensible.

“The only way this underlying conflict can be brought to a decent end is by significantly increasing our support to moderate opposition forces in Syria. We must strengthen their ability to degrade Assad's military advantage, change the momentum on the battlefield, and thereby create real conditions for a negotiated end to the conflict.”

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